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WILD FIELDS GOLD RUSH



Ryan and Jacque Fields, co-owners of Wild Fields Brewhouse

Photo Courtesy of Wild Fields Brewhouse

by Daniel Drennon

At the recent World Beer Cup awards ceremony in Minneapolis, Wild Fields Brewhouse, a relatively new brewpub in Atascadero (California Central Coast) won not one, not two,

not three...but four Gold medals. It was, simply put, a stunning achievement.

Ryan Fields, the masterful brewer who co-owns Wild Fields with his wife Jacque, honed his craft here in Southern California

for over a decade at such revered breweries as Port/The Lost Abbey, Pizza Port and Beachwood Blendery.

Along that impressive path, Fields made a name for himself by winning six medals.

Jacque Fields path was similarly impressive, learning her chops at legendary destination beer bar Beachwood BBQ in Seal Beach from 2006 to 2012, serving as Associate Director of Big Brothers Big

Sisters of Orange County from 2012 to 2017, and then Executive Director of the Orange County Brewers Guild from 2017 to 2018.

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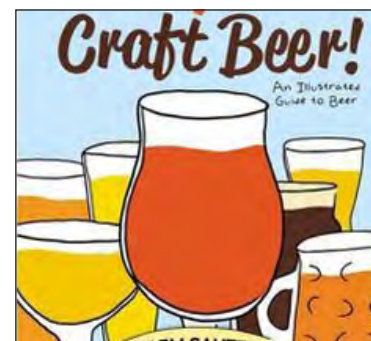
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WORLD BEER CUP

WORLD BEER CUP 2022 - OUR REGIONAL WINNERS!

by David Mulvihill

Breweries in *Beer Paper's* coverage area came home with an impressive haul of the awards received at this year's World Beer Cup competition, which took place in Minneapolis in May. The WBC has historically been a biennial competition; one that was canceled in 2020 (due to the pandemic) after most brewery entries had been submitted. While those entries would not be judged, a collaborative effort initiated by the Brewers Association resulted in distillation of the entries into hand sanitizer. Given the four year gap, WBC 2022 became a very big deal for breweries to make a statement that, not only had they survived the "damnemic," but they were alive, well and making better beer than ever!

Orange County brewers received eight award plaques:

Hard work and perseverance paid off for **Pizza Port San Clemente's** Jon Eckelberger. His version of Dusk til Dawn Imperial Coffee Porter bested 112 entries in the Coffee Stout/Porter category. Jon described the setting just prior to the announcement of his award. Surrounded by his contemporaries, neighbor-brewers from Orange County and San Diego, many who also had entries in the category and won medals for their own coffee beers in the past, he was taken aback by their overwhelming congratulatory response when his beer was announced as the winner. "I was on cloud nine."

Brandon Winneker, Tim Thralls and the **Lost Winds Brewing Co** team (also in San Clemente) garnered gold in the Australian-Style Pale Ale category for Beach Hoppin' Pale. Sabro, Idaho 7, Citra and Mosaic hops are stars in this hoppy pale ale that was initially brewed for Lost Winds' 5th Anniversary. Beach Hoppin's growing popularity has resulted in it becoming a regularly brewed recipe. The team recently canned a batch of the beer, now available at the brewery in cans and on draft.

OC's third gold went to Shaun Morgan and **1886 Brewing Co** in Orange. Record Beer, a 5.2% ABV English-style dark ale, entered in the Brown Porter category, transformed into a Gold "Record" for Shaun. Shaun also



Brandon Winneker and Tim Thralls; Lost Winds

Photo Credit: David Mulvihill



Mike Hernandez and Shaun Morgan; 1886

Photo Credit: David Mulvihill

medaled at last year's Great American Beer Festival for Elleigh's ESB. Last check of the 1886 Brewing draft list revealed both beers currently on tap.

Beachwood Brewing Huntington Beach received its silver plaque for its Full Malted Jacket Scotch/Wee Heavy-style Ale. Beachwood Huntington also scored Bronze for its Mocha Machine Imperial Coffee Chocolate Porter, in the Coffee Stout/Porter category. Beachwood's award-count rises to three if we add the plaque received by Beachwood's wild sister in Long Beach, Beachwood Blendery. Harrison McCabe and the Blendery team were awarded bronze in the Belgian-Style Sour Ale category for Funk Yeah. Julian Shrago, Beachwood Brewmaster and co-owner shared that it is as an honor to receive the awards, especially considering that the competition gets tougher each year.

Anaheim's **Brewery X** team, headed by Trevor Walls, was honored with a silver plaque in the American-Style India Pale Ale Category for Super Slap, a major accomplishment given that there were 384 entries in this highly contested category. For Super Slap, modifications to the recipe for Slap & Tickle were employed in order to step-up the content and hop profile. A super-slap of double dry-hopping paid off in silver.

Additional OC silver went to Evan Price and the **Green Cheek Beer Co** brewers for All Your Friends New Zealand-style IPA, entered into the International India Pale Ale category. The Team also came away from the recent Los Angeles IPA Fest with a 2nd Place win for Ain't Getting Any Deader California IPA. Green Cheek Beer Co owners Brian Rauso and Evan Price shared news of Green Cheek's third location, which they are hoping to open later this summer in the Sunset Beach area of Huntington Beach. Stay tuned.

In addition to the aforementioned bronze for Beachwood Brewing, **Delahunt Brewing Co**, San Clemente, was awarded bronze for De La Sol in the American-style Cream Ale category.

(WORLD BEER CUP continued on page 4)



Julian Shrago and Trina Severson; Beachwood

Courtesy of Brewers Association



Kyle Boruff and Justin Venegas; Delahunt

Photo Credit: David Mulvihill



Brewmaster Trevor Walls (blue shirt center) and the Brewery X team

Photo Credit: David Mulvihill

Beachwood

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A collage of various Beachwood beer cans. Visible labels include: Amalgator IPA, Citraholic IPA, Greenshift Double India Pale Ale, LBC IPA, Mocha Machine Imperial Coffee Chocolate Porter, and 28 Hazy IPA. The cans are arranged in a dynamic, overlapping pattern against a light green background.



Ryan Fields, Jackie Fields and Kayla Morrow; Wild Fields
Photo Courtesy of Brewers Association



Kevin Ashford
Photo Courtesy of Figueroa Mountain Brewing



Josh Tiffany, Evan Price, Brad Kominek, Ryan Berry, and Brian Rauso; Green Cheek
Photo Credit: David Mulvihill



Bob Kunz and Ross Stephenson; HpB
Photo Courtesy of Brewers Association

(WORLD BEER CUP continued)

Los Angeles County brewers brought home four medals:

Highland Park Brewery, Los Angeles: Bob Kunz and the HpB brew crew brought home WBC Gold for one of HpB core IPAs, Hello, LA (International Pale Ale category).

Lincoln Beer Co., Burbank: Silver for Mosaic Pilsner (American Pilsener category).

Cellador Ales, North Hills: Silver for Akimbo 32 (Fruited Wood- and Barrel-Aged Sour Beer category).

San Fernando Brewing Co., San Fernando: Bronze for Imperial Death Star (American-Style Imperial Stout category).

Ventura, Santa Barbara and Inland Counties:

Figueroa Mountain, Santa Barbara: No stranger to the WBC stage, Kevin Ashford and Fig Mtn's Santa Barbara brewers were awarded gold and silver this year in two highly contested categories. Gold came in the American Pale Ale category (160 entries) for Figueroa Mountain Mosaic. Figuerosé was awarded silver in the Herb and Spice Beer category (148 entries). Figuerosé has apparently been rebranded as Santa Barbara Hibiscus Lime for Fig's Shandy Variety Pack.

Transmission Brewing, Ventura: Bronze for Transmission Light (International Light Lager category).

Institution Ale Co., Camarillo: Bronze for Somewhere Golden (American Pale Ale category),

Evans Brewing Co., Corona: Bronze for Pollen Nation Honey Blonde (Honey Beer category).

Central Coast:

As covered in-depth in this issue's cover story, Atascadero's **Wild Fields Brewhouse** and brewmaster Ryan Fields came away with an extraordinary four World Beer Cup Gold plaques:

American-Style Cream Ale: Atascadero Beach

Scottish-Style Ale: Magic Swirling Sip

English-Style Brown Ale: Pine Mountain Monolith

American-Style Brown Ale: Three Bridges Brown

Kern River Brewing Co., Kernville: Gold for California Lounge Chair (American-Style Strong Pale category).

Liquid Gravity Brewing Co., San Luis Obispo: Silver for Liquid Gravity IPA (American-Style Strong Pale category).

David Mulvihill continues his thirst to experience and promote the best of craft beer. He also provides business-side support (reporting, excise tax, policies & personnel) to local breweries and brewers guilds. david@socalcraftbeer.com.

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LA IPA FEST

DANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

RIIP, GREEN CHEEK & BEACHWOOD HOP TO TOP OF LA IPA FEST

by Tomm Carroll

The Home of the Turtle Races became the Home of the (Hop) Terpene Races on Saturday, May 21. After being sidelined by pandemic restrictions for 2021, the 8th (mostly) Annual Los Angeles IPA Fest returned — but this year in the springtime and at a new venue, Brennan's, the Irish-themed roadhouse-style pub in Marina del Rey — to crown the best California IPAs.

Congrats to the winning breweries:

Gold: Dankster Squad — Riip Beer Co.

Silver: Ain't Getting Any Deader — Green Cheek Beer Co.

Bronze: Disciples of Dankness — Beachwood Brewing

People's Choice: Roller Garden — Wagon Wheel Brewing Co.

First Keg to Kick: Memory Machine — There Does Not Exist

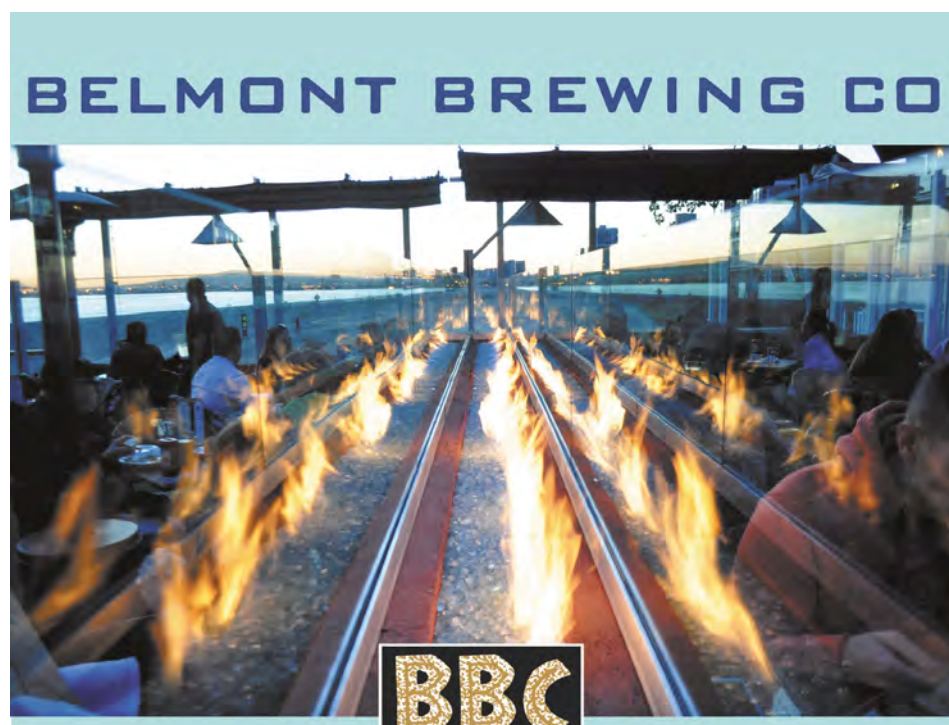
Along with the new event location, two of the winning breweries were first-timers in the competition's winners circles: Riip Beer Co. grabbed gold and Beachwood Brewing took the bronze. However, Evan Price of Green Cheek Beer Co. snagged the silver and made his unprecedented sixth(!) appearance on the LA IPA Fest's winners roster, having placed among the top three twice before with Green Cheek, and three times previously as head brewer at Noble Ale Works.

Voting for the People's Choice Award, which was kept open until Brennan's closed on Saturday night, was not announced until Sunday afternoon. Wagon Wheel is a new brewpub in Oxnard. Brewer Kolaan Busbice was



Danny Priddy; Riip Beer Co

All Photos Credit: Tomo Tany



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formerly the brewer at Modern Times Dankness Dojo in DTLA.

Like the previous site of the competition, Mohawk Bend in Echo Park, Brennan's is owned by the Artisanal Brewers Collective (ABC) — co-founded by local brewpub-and-beer-bar baron and unapologetic IPA fan Tony Yanow — as is Mohawk and several other LA eat-and-drinkeries. Given its vast lawn (and the sunshine, which cooperated), this location is well suited for a festival with more than 50 beers on tap. Plus, an outside space is safer than the crowded indoors, as LA strives to leave Covid infections behind.

As the lone non-brewer, it was an honor to once again be invited to serve on the jury for the competition, alongside many of SoCal's best brewers. There were 20 of us in all, assessing an array of 56 California entries, mainly from the Southland, against the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) style guidelines for American IPA. In other words, no

Hazy IPAs (that's another category).

A veteran judge of more than half of these competitions, I can attest that these West Coast IPA entries just keep getting better and better each year. Even by the second round, the beers in the flight were all quite good, and more difficult than usual to determine which one (only) to advance to the last round. And deciding which three, in order of preference, among the Final Five that deserved trophies was a palate-challenging experience, with the top two apparently coming down to the beer equivalent of a photo finish at the Preakness (which was raced that day as well).

Thanks to everyone involved for a great time, especially Andrew Phillip, GM and beer curator of Tony's Darts Away, for organizing the event!

Tomm Carroll is a beer writer / judge / educator / historian / collector / traveler / drinker (not always in that order). He can be reached at beerscribe@earthlink.net.



Evan Price; Green Cheek Beer Co



Los Angeles IPA Fest



All Photos Credit: Tomo Tany Julian Shrago; Beachwood Brewing

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LAKE ARROWHEAD BREWING THINKING 'BIGGER THAN THE MOUNTAIN!'

by Andrew Smith

“As I began to ascend, I was captivated by the beautiful scenery,” says Richard Schaltz of the first time he drove up to Lake Arrowhead Brewing. “The ride up the hill was absolutely stunning. Approaching the brewery, I was amazed by its presentation, lakeside, tucked beneath a beautiful canopy of mature pines. This type of setting must offer an amazing experience to its customers.”

Schaltz himself ascended from homebrewing, to volunteering at Brew Rebellion, to becoming head brewer at Cal Poly Pomona’s Innovation Brew Works. When Covid temporarily closed the latter, he joined Lake Arrowhead as the assistant brewer. Within three months, the owners, wanting to improve the initial beer program, realized that Schaltz was the head brewer to drive it forward. The

first recipe Schaltz wrote was a revamp of Pinnacle’s Pale Ale. It won gold at the US Open Beer Championship.

Travis and Megan Lanthier were in screen-printing and accounting. They developed their own relationship with craft beer through moves to Portland, Mammoth, and San Diego. Having grown up around Lake Arrowhead, they dreamed of the idea of opening a brewery in the small resort town. By chance, a family member bought the old village maintenance building and offered it to them for their screen-printing business. “We were kind of over screen-printing,” joked Travis.

As I approached the brewery, a little over two years after the opening, I couldn’t help but be seduced by the surroundings. The brewery’s parking lot offers a full view of the



Rich Schaltz on the deck with assistant Hunter Goniea

All Photos Credit: Andrew Smith



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lake. Disappointed by trips to resort breweries in the past, I was reassured by the production-style set up. To the left of the entrance is the 7-barrel brewhouse with a mix of 7-barrel and 15-barrel tanks. Pass the bar and cold box, and you’re back outside in the spacious beer garden, complete with overhanging trees. It’s a surreal journey as you step off the lake, through the brewery, order a beer, then relax amidst the natural serenity.

The opening of the brewery was ill-timed. It was scheduled for the first weekend after the pandemic lockdown. “We were sitting on six tanks of beer and a pallet of crowlers,” Travis recalls, “So we decided to launch a different beer every Saturday, online. By drop three, we were selling out in fifteen seconds.” It’s testament to the way the locals rallied around and embraced the brewery.

Early reviews of the brewery had been mixed, hence the reason Schaltz was promoted to head brewer. Since then, things have flourished. Year one was about solidifying the core brands. Year two was about expanding production. Embarking on their third year, they’re getting creative with hazy IPAs, flavored stouts, a dedicated

sour program, barrel-aged beers, and lots of collaborations. The canning program is expanding and distribution is developing down the hill.

I’d been impressed with my early discoveries of Pinnacle’s Pale and North Bay IPA. Tasted at the brewery, the A-Frame Coffee Stout was excellent, as were the sours. In particular, I got to try an excellent bourbon barrel-aged sour they did for the 2nd anniversary and a delicious blueberry lemonade sour from the tank. Both were great, maintaining the integrity of the sour base but offering a delectable cocktail of flavors.

They’re also canning their Hop Water – something that was a hit at the recent IE Brewers Guild Fest. In regards to the latter, I’d be remiss not to mention the soft, local water. “We get a lot of envy from people that come up, see it and test it,” says Schaltz, “It’s a great starting point.”

It was partly the creativity, but more so the collaborations, that persuaded me to make the drive up the mountain. They did a hazy IPA with Bottle Logic and a barrel-aged collab which is due to be released in the Fall. Most recently, it was an AleSmith Speedway Stout collab that caught my eye.



Owner Travis Lanthier with brewers Hunter Goniea and Rich Schaltz

Any brewery that's drawing in collabs with Alesmith and Bottle Logic had to be worth digging into further.

AleSmith owner, Pete Zien, is a regular visitor to the area. "He happened to stop by here, try our Trail Mix Stout, and was excited about the ingredients we were using," said Travis, "He suggested we do a Speedway collab, and came up here to brew it." The combination produces an insane chocolate richness, countered well by the medley of mixed nuts, raisins and locally roasted coffee. It's the best version of Speedway Stout I've tasted.

There have been further collaborations with Las Palmas Brewing, Laguna Beach Brewing, Northern Pine, June Lake, and a few non-beer brands. There are also several others on the calendar.

"For somebody like me, who's still very young in the industry, it's about shared knowledge," adds Schaltz, "Everybody has their own approach and it's about picking up ideas."

"From a business standpoint, it gets our name out there," continues Travis, "But it's more about keeping the creative juices flowing and motivating the team. This beautiful setting is a great start. But to get people driving up here, we've got to be doing something creative, something cutting edge. We have to think bigger than the mountain!"

They've already won over the local community. In a small resort town, Lake Arrowhead Brewing makes for a unique communal gathering spot. The spacious beer garden is ideal. "Everyone is welcome here," says Megan, "Kids are making friends, dogs are making friends, and the parents can

hang out and relax."

Visitors are adding the brewery to their Lake Arrowhead itinerary and many are driving up for the beer alone. "We get both crowds," continues Megan, "Some people are visiting the area and have heard about us. But we also get people that take daytrips specifically to come see us."

Having observed Lake Arrowhead from a distance, and tasted a couple of their beers, I'd been fairly confident about what I'd discover. Experiencing the brewhouse and the full spectrum of what they had to offer, far exceeded my expectations. The Lanthier's are not complacent with being a resort brewery. They're smart business people who clearly believe that everything revolves around an excellent product. They're also passionate about the innovation and creativity of craft beer. Megan has stepped up to the brew deck for a Hoppy Pilsner and a Pink Boots Sour IPA.

Most importantly, they've invested and put their faith into an excellent brewer, himself passionate about the business, and humble enough to learn and grow. In addition to a solid, established core, Schaltz is producing some of the best hazy IPAs, sours, and stouts in the area. He's one of the rising stars in the business. Watch out for more from them in the near future. Lake Arrowhead Brewing is truly worth a dedicated drive up the mountain. The surrounding area is quite nice too.

Andrew Smith grew up in England and 'thought' he knew everything about beer before he landed on the California craft boom. He covers the Inland Empire more extensively on his blog at CraftBeerIE.com



The Picturesque Beer Garden with Pandemic Domes



The Lake Arrowhead Brewing Family



The Lake Arrowhead Taproom and Brewery

COVER STORY

WILD FIELDS GOLD RUSH

by Daniel Drennon

At the recent World Beer Cup awards ceremony in Minneapolis, Wild Fields Brewhouse, a relatively new brewpub in Atascadero (California Central Coast) won not one, not two, not three...but four Gold medals. It was, simply put, a stunning achievement.

Ryan Fields, the masterful brewer who co-owns Wild Fields with his wife Jacque, honed his craft here in Southern California for over a decade at such revered breweries as Port/The Lost Abbey, Pizza Port and Beachwood Blendery.

Along that impressive path, Fields made a name for himself by winning six medals:

Pizza Port: Nerf Herder English Mild – Bronze World Beer Cup 2012; Order in the Port American Stout – Gold GABF 2013; and, Way Heavy Scotch Ale – Gold GABF 2013.

Beachwood Blendery: Chaos is a Friend of Mine – Belgian Style Sour – Silver GABF 2016;

Dia De Los Mangos - Chili Sour – Bronze GABF 2017; and, Funk Yeah - Belgian-Style Sour – Gold GABF 2018.

Jacque Fields path was similarly impressive, learning her chops at legendary destination beer bar Beachwood BBQ in Seal Beach from 2006 to 2012, serving as Associate Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County from 2012 to 2017, and then Executive Director of the Orange County Brewers Guild from 2017 to 2018.

DRENNON: *Ryan, Jacque attended World Beer Cup carrying around a cardboard cut-out of you. I presume you had to stay behind to take care of your kids and run the brewery. Were you watching the live feed at least? Please share the emotions you were feeling as the medals were announced.*

RYAN: I've been to CBC and WBC many times, and part of the motivation to start a brewery together was so we could share in these fun activities. So yeah, it was Jacque's long overdue turn to make the trip, and we weren't quite in a position yet to both make it.



GOLD GOLD GOLD GOLD!!!! Ryan and Jacque Fields, co-owners of Wild Fields Brewhouse All Photos Courtesy of Wild Fields

It was nice getting to watch the live feed with the team here and some of our regulars. The first award was definitely the best, because after that point you're way more relaxed and the rest are just bonuses. Every time we got an award I ran around and gave every person in the building a high five. It was magical and I honestly don't know how we pulled it off. Gonna be hard to top!

DRENNON: *Talk about each of the beers that won a World Beer Cup Gold medal.*

RYAN: Atascadero Beach Mexican Lager – LOVE that this beer got a medal. We just started making it year-round as our only beer that can be a permanent handle. It's been hugely successful for us here on the central coast, and it has the name of our city in the brand!

Pine Mountain Monolith English Brown Ale – Stoked for this one as it got Gold at the CA Craft Brewers Cup and GABF last year! It's on a hot streak.

Magic Swirling Sip Scottish Ale – I brewed this beer specifically to enter at World Beer Cup. Seemed like a style that we could win, and I've always wanted to make a Scottish Ale. This ended up being a very popular beer at the pub.

Three Bridges American Brown Ale – The third of the 'landmark' beers that won for us, as Three Bridges is a local hiking trail. I was most confident in this batch going into the competition. Had the perfect balance of chocolate malt and citrusy hop character.

DRENNON: *Jax, what was it like being there in person and hearing Wild Fields again and again?*

JACQUE: Surreal! My favorite part of competitions is seeing friends win. We were sitting with the Pizza Port crew so the celebrations and hugs seemed endless. The first gold for Atascadero Beach in Cream Ale was all the joy I could have asked for; Kayla, our Assistant Brewer, and I were crying and hugging. I could barely breathe. Cream Ale category isn't an easy one!

I was already on a cloud when we won English Brown, on the way up to the stage I just kept saying "is this real?". After that I may have gone into shock... After Scottish Ale I texted Ryan with "WTF is happening?". And then Three Bridges Brown was literally overload. Afterwards, we walked out with the four medals and at one point Kayla and I just sat on the lobby floor staring at the boxes.

DRENNON: *Ryan, tell me about growing up. What were you into? How did it shape you into who you are now? Who and/or what inspires you?*

RYAN: I was an extremely shy kid and grew up on an abalone farm three miles from the nearest neighbor. I excelled in school, and was really into physics and music, so much so that I had a very hard time choosing a path for college. I chose physics, but after college felt like I was missing a passion for what I was doing. Brewing inspires me so much because of the balance of science and art. It satisfies both sides of my brain.



DRENNON: *What was your training and path to become a brewer? Have you had mentors? Who are they and what did they teach you?*

RYAN: My start in this industry was one of those right place right time moments when the Lost Abbey needed some help on the bottling line, and I needed a part time job while I finished college. It was still a very small operation then, and Tomme (famed Lost Abbey owner/brewmaster Tomme Arthur) took me under his wing and I was quickly moved into positions involving brewing and barrel work. It was there that I developed a strong passion for making Belgian-inspired sour beers, and also gained most of my

base knowledge about brewing. When a Head Brewer position opened up at Pizza Port San Clemente it seemed like great step for me and, luckily, I got the spot. San Clemente is pretty far from the other ‘Ports’ so I was given a lot of autonomy, but learned a lot from the other brewers there at the time; namely Jeff Bagby and Yiga Miyashiro. Sour beer took a back burner position but I was able to hone my skills at making beer on a pub system. After a few years I was ready to move to the next step and heard about Beachwood opening a facility dedicated to Belgian-inspired sours. I was stoked when Gabe (Gordon) and Julian (Shrago) offered me the opportunity to

help build out the Blendery program and be the Head Brewer. At this point Jacque and I were already planning long term to move up to the Central Coast so the Blendery position had a timeline built in. My time there was amazing and I was able to learn so much about making Belgian-inspired beers, mainly due to the large amount of risk Gabe was willing to take to get it right. I gleaned a lot of knowledge from both Gabe and Julian, and honed in my palate a lot tasting through barrels so often. I also got to be involved with more of the business management which proved to be very helpful when starting up Wild Fields.

DRENNON: *Jax, you’re an industry veteran as well. Tell us about your journey in the beer industry? What skills did you learn along the way that helped you start and run Wild Fields?*

JACQUE: I happened upon a serving job at Beachwood BBQ in Seal Beach through a dishwasher I had worked with before. Beachwood had been open maybe a month at that point. I was only 20 at the time, and we had rotating craft beer taps. In 2006, that wasn’t the norm. I got to learn all about beer styles and brewing concepts from Gabe (owner Gabe Gordon) and our guests. Beachwood was the

(COVER STORY continued on page 12)

Beer as Unique as the People Who Drink It



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(COVER STORY continued)

first place I ever felt surrounded by people like me. We are all weird and loved talking over and about a great craft beer; I credit this time as my most formative years in being who I am today. I was there through the expansion from eight tables and three barstools with only eight taps to a full bar and dining room and 21 taps. I was able to learn what an evolving restaurant from the ground up looked like; it wasn't always a walk in the park but we strived to be excellent in what we did and I lived for that.

I was going to UC Irvine when I met Ryan and relocated to San Clemente while he worked at Pizza Port San Clemente. I would pick up shifts and got to see a different beer service model. I also helped get Ryan beer placements in local craft beer spots when I was commuting. I learned how to work festivals then and just really knew I loved everything about this industry but I wanted to see where my degree in Urban Studies and Community Development would take me.

I was offered a full time with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County,

working my way from Customer Relations Specialist to Associate Director of Community Based Programs; in my time there I was able to develop our sponsorships with breweries and events and help grow the organizations mentorship program – my time there was phenomenal and I learned so much about how non-profits worked. At this point Ryan was working at Beachwood Blendery and we had made a plan to start our own brewery in the future. I knew I wanted to move fulltime into beer but I wasn't sure where I would fit so I asked for a job at Beachwood again and along came the opening for the Executive Director of the Orange County Brewers Guild. I was so nervous for my interview and grateful when I was offered the position! My two-years there were some of the best for shaping my vision for our operations. I was able to expand my network in the industry and learn how to run a board of directors, financials, events, promotions, an entire internal and external membership program. I wasn't ready to leave but life put a great brewpub location in our path for Wild Fields so we had to take it! Today, I run our kitchen, financials, HR, operations, staffing and marketing.



Wild Fields Brewhouse game area

All Photos Courtesy of Wild Fields

DRENNON: *When did you first conceive of the idea to open your own brewery and why Atascadero?*

JACQUE: I never dreamed of owning a brewery until Ryan and I got together; I don't think either of us did until we met. It was one of those things that comes up when you're both working in it; what we loved, what we were struggling with, what we dreamed of, it just became part of us. We would jokingly say 'when we have our own brewery' and at some point, it just became a reality that someday we would do this thing. We had a couple opportunities but our visions didn't align. We knew we wanted to raise kids near family so we decided we would make it happen on the Central Coast to be closer to Ryan's side. We had visited Atascadero many times to see his mom and sister. We met with the City of Atascadero, they loved our concept and had great manufacturing locations in downtown, had experience opening breweries before through their permits department, and connected us with the perfect location. Let's just say the stars aligned and here we are.

DRENNON: *What is the vibe at Wild Fields, and how does it fit into the community?*

JACQUE: I like to say we are founded on a brewery, but we are all about community. Ryan and I love how much beer can impact the local community so we do our best to partner with causes that speak to us. We also want the brewery to be a nod to the history of pubs. It's a watering hole

where everyone feels welcome. In addition to Ryan's 20 beer taps, we have wine, rotating cider and seltzer, non-alcoholic craft beer, local craft soda and more. I call the food menu homestyle pub-grub. It's inspired by my family and food I love having a beer with – the menu spans the board from a vegan carrot dog that we make in house to a loaded mac & cheese with kielbasa and bacon you can make "buffalo style." I am all about making people feel welcome and comfortable and I hope our entire concept speaks to that.

DRENNON: *Ryan, do you have a brewing philosophy?*

RYAN: At Wild Fields our favorite word to use to describe our beer is 'balance'. We want all of the flavors and aromas to be in harmony with each other, to create a completely drinkable and enjoyable experience. We tend to lean toward the traditional styles, and love having a wide range of beers on tap, from Blonde Ale, to West Coast IPA, Brown Ale, Belgians, Sours, etc. We do some experimenting here and there as well, especially with our barrel program. We have a Belgian-Style Sour Ale with Viognier Grapes and Nelson Hops coming out soon. The combination developed some amazing flavors! We also tap a new cask every Thursday and play around with fun experimental additions in those. Overall, we just want to have a beer for everyone. There's rarely an occasion where we can't find a beer that someone will like.

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Ryan and Jacque Fields

DRENNON: *What have been your most important lessons learned as a brewer and what advice would you give to aspiring brewers?*

RYAN: The biggest piece of advice that I usually give to brewers when training is this. You're gonna make mistakes. That's part of the learning process. The most important thing is how you react to those mistakes, and how you use them to move forward. And ideally, you can start to learn big lessons from small mistakes. The expert is just the person who's already made all the mistakes.

The most common advice that I got from my mentors before starting Wild Fields was "Don't Do It!", and this is probably the advice I would give a lot of people. Not because you shouldn't do it, you just need to realize how hard it is, and have an unstoppable drive and passion to the point that not succeeding isn't an option.

DRENNON: *You are a musician and I'm always fascinated by the nexus between being a musician and brewer. Tell us about that.*

RYAN: I keep music as my fun hobby, my escape from reality, my zen moments. Untouched by money and responsibility. I think I have just as much passion for music as I do for brewing, I just spend a LOT more time brewing and I'm better at it. I still dream of doing something with music, like being a song writer. I don't have the personality to be a performer.

DRENNON: *Jax, what is your short- and long-term vision for Wild Fields?*

JACQUE: Short-term I am focusing on building up our team so Ryan and I don't have to be here so much – if I can inspire folks the way we were inspired by our past employers I will consider that a win. Long-term I see us looking at possible off-site concepts using the production from our location here. But as our friend Val says "Viva la Wild Fields" and we are going to take the ride.

In ten years, I see Wild Fields training up our kids to be hard workers! I am really looking forward to them being old enough to be a part of this business! I hope that we can keep our passion going and spread that to the local community. If we can be a place that folks know and trust to try weird stuff that we want to make, that is going to feel pretty great.

DRENNON: *Jax, what are your influences on the beer side of Wild Fields? What are your favorite styles of beer?*

JACQUE: That's a tough one! I really just try and let Ryan do his thing. I give him feedback and sometimes he listens to me. Like when I said, I love our 4101 Hoppy Pale Ale but I want something more crushable like Sierra Nevada Pale Ale but with a touch less malt. A few weeks later, he sampled me on Porch Drinkin,' our crushable pale ale. I find myself just always looking forward to coming up with a concept and having Ryan make it a reality. I like to say that I

don't discriminate against any beer, I definitely lean towards west coast IPA's but I love variety.

DRENNON: *What collaborations have you done so far and why do you like collaborating?*

RYAN: We don't have a ton of time for collaborations these days, but we probably do on average one a month. We collab with a lot of local breweries we are developing friendships with, as well as breweries we've been friends with forever. We love collaborating because that's how you learn new things. We didn't get here by ourselves, we learned from people we admire, and also pushed the boundaries and experimented with our peers. The beer community is an amazing and open place, and collaborations are a window into that for the consumer. They are also a great way to get introduced to a new pool of customers. Plus, it's just really fun to hang out and make a beer with friends.

DRENNON: *Between talent and work ethic, which is more important?*

RYAN: Work Ethic. Especially in this industry. It's a LOT of work. Seems to me that most of the people that make it in this industry are the ones that work

the hardest. That being said, work/life balance is extremely important, and very hard to manage in this business. Not burning out is key.

JACQUE: I also say work ethic. Heck, I never was a chef by trade but give me some time and determination and I now have a killer crew we have grown up from scratch. I hire for work ethic.

DRENNON: *If you, Ryan, weren't a brewer and you, Jacque, weren't the CEO of Wild Fields, what would you each be instead?*

RYAN: I could see myself being a scientist studying psychedelics and/or dreams. Or someone that just buys old houses, fixes them up, and flips them. Jax and I are constantly doing home improvement projects.

JACQUE: Based on my degree, I would have probably stayed in non-profit world or worked for a City or County government.

DRENNON: *If you had to describe yourself in one word or phrase, what would it be?*

RYAN: A confidently quiet intellectual artist and family man

JACQUE: I am absolutely fabulous.

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QUEEN'S DAY YORKSHIRE SQUARE TO TOAST THE PLATINUM JUBILEE

by Tomm Carroll



Mike Copley, Her Majesty the Queen, Gary Croft and Stephen Copley
Photo Credit: Tomo Tany

British expat craft beer fans in Southern California who are envious of the four-day Bank Holiday weekend at the beginning of June that their countrymen and women are celebrating back in the homeland in honor of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee — 70 years as the reigning British monarch — can take solace. Yorkshire Square Brewing owner Gary Croft has got his fellow stateside Brits covered. The cask-forward British brewpub in Torrance is throwing a day-long Platinum Jubilee party for all on Saturday, June 4.

"Jubilees don't happen all that often, and a Platinum Jubilee is something we're not gonna see again in our lifetimes," explains Croft, clearly excited about this milestone. "There's been a few jubilees — 25 years, 50 years, but never one for 70 years, and this is the oldest one for a British monarch. Most people think Queen Victoria reigned that long, but she only lasted 63 years and seven months [during most of the 1800s]."

Throughout the UK, the licenses have been adjusted to allow pubs to increase their hours and remain open until 1:00 am, instead of the usual 11:00 pm, for the Friday-Monday holiday, and Croft has followed suit with Yorkshire's Platinum party running from noon until midnight. "The celebration will not only be in the UK, by the way; they'll be having street parties all throughout the Commonwealth," he adds. "You get to know everybody." And that's just the vibe Yorkshire is aiming for here in the southwestern reaches of what was England's onetime colony.

Admission is free, and Croft anticipates 10 cask ales on offer. One of them, mirroring what many of Britain's breweries are doing, will be a special "Jubilee Ale" brewed expressly for the occasion. It's an English-style Summer Ale: Straw-to-gold-colored body with biscuity or slight caramel notes, medium floral hop aroma/flavor with medium-low bitterness, well-balanced with the malt character, and traditionally 3.7-5.1% abv. In other words, "sessionable" in the grand English tradition.

Yorkshire's brewers, the father and son team of Mike and Stephen Copley, created the recipe. A traditional cask-conditioned version of the Summer Ale will be available from a firkin via hand pump. There will also be a draught version tapped from a keg, as well as cans to drink there or to take away — presenting a great opportunity for beer fans to taste the same batch of beer conditioned and served in different ways.

Also, according to Croft, "This is the first time in my lifetime I'm aware that the Queen's estate has relaxed the copyright and use of Her Majesty's image for this particular festival. During the Platinum weekend, you can use the Queen's image to promote anything you're doing that is part of the Jubilee celebration. So we've got her image on the can of Jubilee Ale — which will never happen again."

"It'll be a collector's item, but don't save it for too long" jokes Mike Copley," to which Croft retorts, "We should put on the can, 'Do Not Age for 70 Years' — it will not work well!"

Also to debut at the Jubilee celebration will be the Copleys' new collaboration with Rives Borland, head brewer at Project Barley in Lomita, called Ghosts of Bebbanburg, the name taken from Richard Cornwell's *The Last Kingdom* series. "That whole area of Northumbria [the medieval kingdom in what is now Northern England] was one of the original sites of the Viking invasions back in the day," explains Mike. "So we took that name for the beer, in which we're combining Scandinavian kveik yeast with some of our more modern English hops from Charles Fararm hop farms."

Adds Stephen, "This beer is a great example of keeping our roots in British traditions and making authentic English beer, but also acknowledging that there's history there, and a lot of crossover in history, like in this case, the Danes coming in and raiding."

"It's more like celebrating the British influence on beer throughout the world," Mike elaborates. "You want to be able to keep those traditions

beerwork





The Queen and her court of brewers

Photo Credit: Tomo Tany

but you also have to understand the full magnitude of its influence everywhere, and celebrate it.” Interjects Stephen: “Honestly, that’s kind of our philosophy. We call this place a modern British brewery, which encompasses all this, all these adjacent influences.”

The Copleys’ other collaboration with Project Barley, the Strong Ale called Thrice Kiss Wurm that was brewed for Yorkshire’s Fifth Anniversary Party last month, will also be on cask, and available in a grog version. At press time, the only confirmed guest beer was a keg of the heralded Bluebird Bitter from Coniston Brewing in the English Lake District, rarely seen on the West Coast of the US. There will also be beer cocktails, cider, wine and soft drinks.

For solid sustenance, the menu will feature such popular items from the kitchen’s regular menu as fish and chips, sausage rolls, and specials like cottage pie (similar to a shepherd’s pie, but with beef instead of lamb) with a garlic mash on top, and a side of Texas toast, and the debut of “the Ultimate British Burger,” the recipe for which had not been decided at press time — aside from the fact that it will be adorned with a tiny Union Jack flag.

The *pièce de résistance*, or course, is the dessert: “Platinum Pudding.” According to Croft, the UK held a contest for residents to contribute desserts, and after a year of competition with 5,000 entries, a group of celebrity judges (of course) tasted the final five choices and came up with the official Platinum Pudding dessert. “They came up with one winner, and it’s a Lemon Swiss Roll and Amaretti Trifle,” he said. “It’s rather complicated to make, but we’re gonna do it anyway. We’ll make it in individual sizes, so there will be enough for everybody who comes to celebrate.”

As for entertainment, there will be several bands, including the Old Ale Boys (actually brewers Mike and Stephen Copley moonlighting as musicians) playing and singing English and Irish drinking songs, and likely a few surprises.

And in keeping with the British Pub tradition, there will be a quiz — appropriately a Queen Quiz, on all things Elizabeth. Expats and Anglophiles be warned: This one promises to be rather difficult. “The questions are brutal,” confirms Croft.

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BOOK REVIEW

'HOORAY FOR BEER!'

by Sean Inman

People learn differently. Some people need to see it, others need to hear it and others may need to do it to become knowledgeable on a topic. What tends to get a bit lost in the translation is to be able to have fun while learning. And, if you are going to learn about beer, fun should be at the top of the agenda.

That is where Em Sauter comes in. The author and illustrator of *Hooray for Craft Beer!*, Sauter combines being a BJCP Beer Judge and Advanced Cicerone with her MFA in cartooning to create an illustrated guide to craft beer, titled *Hooray for Craft Beer!* Even the title is fun.

You get a beer education from beer basics, beer history, the brewing process, brewing ingredients, beer and food, the world of beer styles, how to enjoy beer to the fullest and finishing with not finishing, the beer journey never ends.

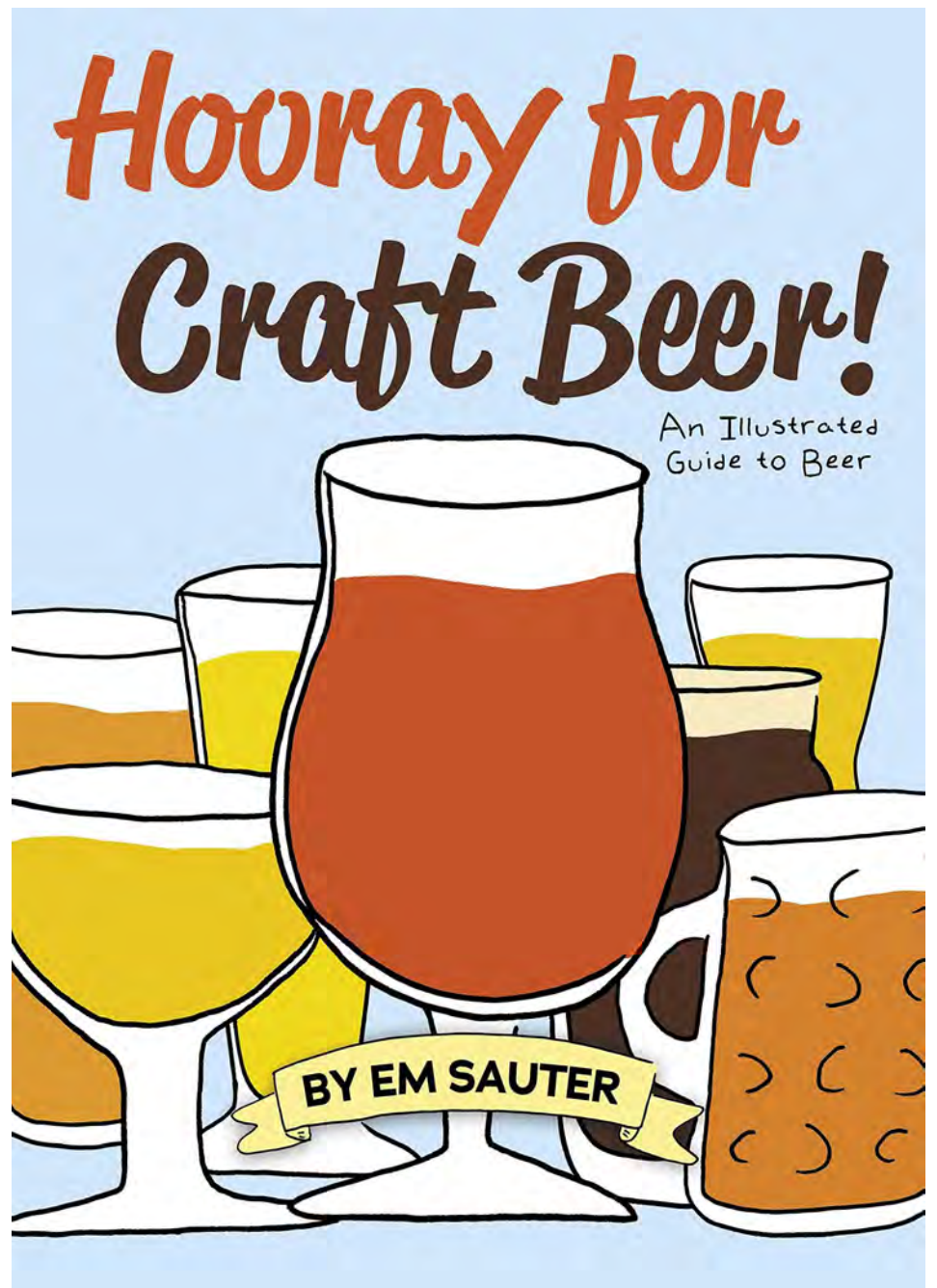
It may seem like a lot to some beer fans who are just starting their deep dive into craft beer and to the old hands it may seem like ground already covered in other beer books but I found *Hooray for Craft Beer!* to always have a golden nugget of information that I had not thought about before or was presented in an easier to picture way. For example, when talking about London porter and the large vessels used, Sauter compares the large wooden tanks which held 750,000 gallons to an Olympic swimming pool, size 660,000 gallons. That makes more sense to my mind.

This is also very present in the section on beer styles. Each page gives you four Aroma / Flavor clues as well as two food items as suggested pairings. For Irish Red Ales, Sauter proposes fish and chips or a grilled cheese sandwich. I would have thought of one or maybe the other but not both. This is a strength that makes this book an easy to use reference when



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you need to know a beer fact quickly and not have to read through multiple pages to find what you are looking for.

Sauter's cartoon alter ego guides us through the book so let's talk about the cartooning style. It is cute and colorful and leans into not being super detailed, instead showing us just enough for the eyes to recognize a banana or a pretzel.

I think the best example is on the two pages celebrating beer pioneers. Sauter doesn't just use the most common photos of beer celebrities like Charles Bamforth or Carol Stoudt (if those two names are unfamiliar, you may need this book) but instead skews the cartoons younger which is a great way to make the people seem modern instead of historical. I also liked the little *Laverne & Shirley* panel tucked into the pages. The drawing style works particularly well with hops to delineate how certain varietals look instead of just a generic green cone.

In this book, the shapes and colors are different for each hop.

For some columns, I wish that Sauter would spin-off into a subsequent book, or books. Prime candidates for that treatment would be all of the hop varietals and beer travel. Both would benefit from the sense of whimsy that she brings to beer. Both have loads of potential information that she could illuminate further than the space allotted for this book.

The question, would I like to have a beer with someone, gets a bit overused but in this case the answer is practically on each page. Yes, I would like to have a beer with Em Sauter. It would be fun and I would learn something.

Sean Inman is a Glendale based beer blogger who has been posting about beer since 2009. He has also written for *Food GPS* and *Thrillist*.

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